

ACS & MST in December Meeting

Emergency Communications in a Changing World

Peter Smith, N7BYP

On Saturday morning, December 8, 2001, a joint meeting of the Seattle Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) and the Western Washington Medical Services Team (MST) was held at the Seattle Public Utilities Operations Control Center in south Seattle. Approximately fifty members from ACS and MST were in attendance. Duane Mariotti, WB9RER, Director of Clinical Engineering, Harborview Medical Center gave an illustrated presentation entitled "Bioterrorism: The World since September 11 – What you really didn't want to know."

Mr. Mariotti outlined lessons learned from national and local disasters and times of civil disorder. He stressed that we must remember that anything is

possible. Therefore it is essential that we review our emergency communications responsibilities in that light. One clear implication is the need for additional training. Part of preparedness is in understanding and knowing how to respond to biological and chemical terror events. Main-

taining communications will be vital and we should do all we can to ensure that communications failures will not occur. To help make sure that communications will be possible in time of need we should work to establish redundant systems. These include multiple radios, multiple bands, multiple phones, and multiple systems.

Various biological and chemical terror threats were discussed along with means for dealing with them. Equipment, resources, and response systems were described and discussed. Mr. Mariotti summarized his presentation by stating that disaster plans need to be updated, that equipment should be generic, that hospitals need the same equipment and capabilities, and that communications is key. Of course, training is essential.



Photo by P. Smith

Duane Mariotti, WB9RER discusses emergency communications

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QRV?

QRV? = "Are you prepared?"

*QRV? is the Newsletter of the Seattle
Auxiliary Communication Service*

City of Seattle
Emergency Management

ACS Net & Disaster Coordination
Weekly Net, Mondays at 7:00 p.m.
146.96 MHz

ACS Primary Message Channels
441.80 MHz (tone 141.3 Hz)
443.00 MHz (tone 141.3 Hz)
443.65 MHz (tone 141.3 Hz)

ACS 6 Meter Frequency
53.250 MHz (tone 100 Hz)

ACS Website
www.cityofseattle.org/eoc/acs

State & County Nets
Washington State Emergency
Mondays at 6:30 p.m.
Saturdays at 9:00 a.m.
3.987 MHz

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King County ARES
Sundays at 8:00 p.m.
146.82 MHz (tone 103.5)

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From the Editor

Reciprocity Failure

Are any of you photographers? If you are, you may have heard of the term "reciprocity." To photographers, "reciprocity" refers to the normal, predictable relationship between film and light. To get the correct film exposure under differing lighting conditions, photographers vary the amount of light that film receives. When there is more light, the film receives a shorter exposure to light; when there is less light, the film receives a longer exposure. Because "reciprocity," that relationship between light and film is predictable most of the time, photographers usually get good pictures regardless of the amount of light present. Well, almost always.

Photographers also know that if light is extremely low the expected "reciprocity," or relationship between light and film exposure changes. This condition is known as "reciprocity failure." Photographers understand that film's sensitivity of film to light is predictable within *normal* limits, but if the light reaches *abnormally* low levels, film responds to light in a very different way. How do photographers deal with reciprocity failure? Do they stop taking pictures when light is abnormally low? No. They deal with reciprocity failure by adjusting their exposure to account for it. Through experience photographers have learned that film requires a much longer exposure to light when that light falls to abnormally low levels. They get good photographs in spite of reciprocity failure because they have learned two things. They have learned when reciprocity failure occurs, and they have learned how to make adjustments for it.

So what does reciprocity failure have to do with ACS? A good question, I was getting to that. Think about what we do. We are active during *normal* times. We are active during *abnormal* times. During normal times we hold our weekly nets, we participate in drills, we have our meetings, we conduct training. We maintain good communications among ourselves and between our unit and the city, county,

From the EOC

By Jim Mullen, Director
Seattle Emergency Management

It's February, and a new City Administration is settling in. Everywhere I go, I am asked for my perspective on changes that we might see, and I am frequently asked to size up the new Administration's commitment to emergency preparedness.

On January 2, Mayor Nickels' first day on the job, he and several of his senior

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staff spent almost two hours in the EOC. The Mayor received a briefing from Police, Fire and Emergency Management orienting him to the procedures we follow during an activation of the City EOC. He also toured our facility.

My "take" is this: this was more than a symbolic visit and orientation. The Mayor and his staff are thoroughly engaged in the implementation of public safety programs. Straightforward questions were asked, and we provided straightforward answers. The Mayor has since expanded on this visit by highlighting his intention to prioritize emergency preparedness in his recent "State of the City" address. We can expect an emphasis upon exercises, planning, and wise allocation of resources. He is familiar with our programs, and philosophically is headed in the proper direction.

The work of ACS was referenced in the January 2nd briefing. As we move forward, the new Administration will see what those of us in Emergency Management already know: that the City is blessed to have a cadre of trained, motivated and dedicated citizens that want no more than the opportunity to help protect our community.

That's all for now, but thank you again for your commitment and sacrifices for our City.

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ACADEMY 2002

PLANNING UNDERWAY

By Peter Smith, N7BYP

Since December, planning has been underway for Academy 2002. Led by Marina Zuetell, N7LSL, planners include Terry Dettmann, WX7S, Bill Dockstader W7LSK, Rick Hodges, KB7TBF, Mark Sheppard, N7LYE, Peter Smith, N7BYP, Ann Werner, N7YDY, and Mark Whitaker, KD7KUN.

The Academy, now in its fourth year, is a two-day training workshop for volunteer emergency communicators. It is sponsored by ARES of King County, the King County EOC Support Team, the Pacific Northwest REACT Council, the Seattle Auxiliary Communications Service, and the Western Washington Medical Services Communications Team. This year the Academy will be held on Saturday,

March 23, and Sunday, March 24. Workshop sessions will begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 5:00 p.m. The location will be the same as last year, the NOAA Administration Campus, 7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Building 9.

The program promises to offer something for everyone. At the present time, sessions are planned for emergency management, regional and national hazards, communications protocols, emergency communication team contacts, and field communications practice. In addition communications vans will be onsite for those who would like to check them out.

This year attendees will also have the opportunity to participate in the ARRL Emergency Communications Course. This course will run through several sessions. Participants who complete the course will be able to take a test for ARRL Level One Emergency Communications certification.

We are very fortunate this year to have Tom Carrubba KA2D as keynote speaker. Tom is the ARRL ARES Sec-

tion Emergency Coordinator and Assistant Section Manager for New York City-Long Island. He will speak on the topic: "The Real Thing: Response, Actions, and Lessons from 9.11.01 in New York City. We will have an opportunity to hear a first-hand account of how amateur radio operators became involved in responding to the events of September 11th.

Please note that pre-registration will be required because of increased security concerns. You may register online at <http://www.academy2002.org>. A voluntary \$5.00 fee will be collected to help defray the expenses associated with bringing the keynote speaker to the conference. Mark your calendar now! Be sure to attend Academy 2002. It will be your opportunity to receive valuable training in support of your role as an emergency communicator. Training and preparedness have never been more important than they are now. Remember, as the Academy 2002 motto reminds us: Emergency Communications: It's a different World Now. ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Scenes from the December ACS-MST Meeting

Photos by P. Smith



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state, and national organizations we serve. Everything works well, communications are generally predictable, and we are successful in fulfilling our mission. We know what to expect. There is "reciprocity," predictable relationships among us and between our unit and those we serve in fulfillment of our common mission.

Our mission also calls us to activity during *abnormal* times. We provide important, perhaps critically important communication links in times of disaster. Will the positive, productive relationship between ACS and the organizations we serve during normal times be maintained, or will we experience something like film's

reciprocity failure during these abnormal times? Can disasters of the magnitude of September 11th cause breakdowns in our relationships that significantly limit our effectiveness?

Clearly, we cannot allow "reciprocity failure" to interfere when we are asked to serve in time of disaster. The events of September 11th remind us that large-scale disasters can happen quickly and unexpectedly. So, the question for us is: How can we prevent serious breakdowns in relationships, our own kind of "reciprocity failure," during abnormal times of disaster? By taking our cue from photographers who deal with reciprocity failure and still manage to get good pictures.

Remember, they can predict when and how reciprocity failure might affect their photographs.

We should likewise try to predict when and how reciprocity failure may disrupt our relationships and lead to communication breakdowns. Drills, simulations, and other training events can help us identify when reciprocity failure may occur, and how we can make adjustments to overcome it. We should take every opportunity to better ourselves by engaging in training and practice exercises.

Speaking of training, one of the best training events we have is the upcoming Academy 2002. Let's all make it a priority to be there. ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Application for Emergency Communications Team Membership & State Emergency Worker Registration

- 1, Go to the ACS website <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/eoc/acs/application.htm>
2. Follow instructions there to complete your application.

For more information, check with Mark Sheppard -- see contact information under "QRV?," page 2 of this issue.

Field Day

When: June 22, 23, 2002

Where: Sand Point

Who: Paul Beringer, NG7Z, is coordinating the event.

More Info: Spring issue of *QRV?* and Field Day e-mail list. To get on the e-mail list contact Dave Prince WB0RAZ

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